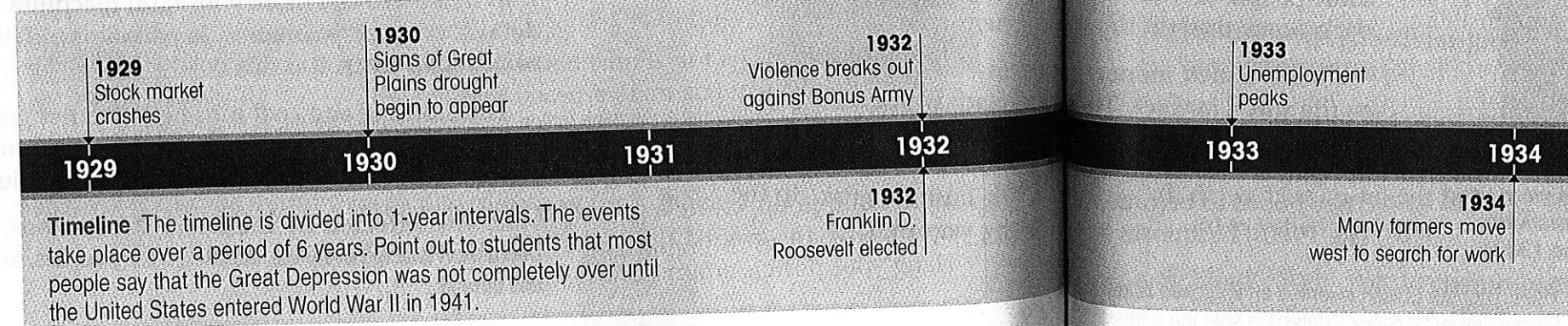


During the Great Depression, some people lived in shacks made of wood and tin. Some people sold apples to earn money. What does the photograph above show about people's lives during the Great Depression? People were having a difficult time. They lived in shacks.



The Great Depression



Chapter 19 The Great Depression 1929–1934

ESL Note To help students understand the concept of economic depression, discuss difficult economic times they, or people they know, may have experienced in other countries. What were the causes and effects?

Words to Know

stock market

depression

default

foreclose

bonus

drought

migrant worker

public works

relief

Words to Know These words are defined in the section in which they appear, as well as in the Glossary. Point out to students that the suffix *-ion* indicates a state of being. In this case, it indicates the state of being *depressed*, or lowered.

Learning Objectives

- Explain the causes of the Great Depression.
- Describe how the Great Depression changed the lives of Americans.
- Discuss the hardships suffered by farmers, African Americans, and Mexican Americans during the Great Depression.
- Explain President Hoover's approach to helping Americans during the Great Depression.
- Explore how the Dust Bowl affected Americans.

Project Students will be able to begin the project after they have finished reading the chapter. Students may need to do additional research.

Portfolio Project

You have been asked to help prepare a television documentary on the Great Depression. Choose a group of people whose lives were affected by that event. Take notes on the ways that their lives changed. Write an article describing what happened.

Section

1

The Nation's Troubled Economy

Words to Know

stock market

a place where stocks, or shares in businesses, are bought and sold

depression

a time when the economy of a nation falls sharply

default

to fail to pay a loan when it is due

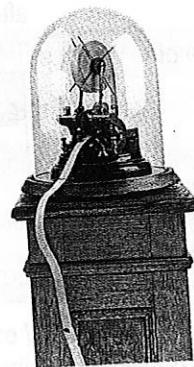
foreclose

to take the property of someone who has failed to pay back a loan

bonus

money given in addition to what is owed

Getting Started Discuss with students how they would feel if their money suddenly disappeared. Explain that at this time in history many people all over the United States actually lost all their money.



Telegraphic ticker machines were used in stock markets during the 1920s.

Visual In 1869, Thomas Edison invented an improved ticker machine called the Edison Universal Stock Printer. He sold the rights for \$40,000.

In the 1920s, the media often made the times seem carefree and exciting. Yet, many people had barely enough money to pay their bills. When the U.S. economy began to fall apart, the nation suffered.

The Stock Market Crash

In the 1920s, fewer than five percent of Americans were wealthy. Most Americans lived on a yearly income of \$3,000 or less. They worked long hours for low pay. When Americans needed something that cost a lot, some people borrowed money that they could not pay back. Some paid on the installment plan.

To solve their money problems, some people turned to the **stock market**. That is a place where stocks, or shares in businesses, are bought and sold. When people bought stocks, they became part owners of a business. They hoped to become rich as the business grew. In the late 1920s, businesses were doing very well.

People made money in the stock market, and they wanted to make even more money. Many people borrowed money to buy more stocks.

In the autumn of 1929, however, the stock prices began to drop. People did not want to lose their money, so they began to sell their stocks. As a result, the prices dropped even more. On October 29, 1929, stock prices plunged. Many stocks became worthless. People who had borrowed money to buy stocks had suddenly lost all their money.

? What caused the stock market to crash in 1929? As people tried to sell their stocks, the value of the stocks dropped.

The Great Depression

Soon after the stock market crash, the United States entered a **depression**. A depression is a time when the economy of a nation falls sharply. It was called the Great Depression.

As the 1920s ended, millions of people were out of work. Farmers were losing their farms. Banks began to go out of business because they had used their customers' savings to buy stocks.

Other things were happening in the country that helped bring about the Great Depression. During World War I, many farmers had sold food crops to the armed forces. They earned a lot of money. After the war, fewer crops were needed. Prices fell. Many farmers who had borrowed money for farm machines began to **default** on their payments. To default is to fail to pay back a loan when it is due.

The clothing and coal-mining industries grew smaller as big businesses grew larger. Thousands of factory workers in small industries lost their jobs.

? Who was affected by the Great Depression? The Great Depression affected everyone, including factory workers, bankers, and farmers.

Economics Fact

The day on which the New York Stock Market crashed was called Black Tuesday.

Economics Fact Tell students that after Black Tuesday, stock values fell steadily for the next three years. Between 1930 and 1933, stock prices went down 80 percent.

Hard Times

By the beginning of 1932, the U.S. economy had almost fallen completely apart. Thousands of businesses had closed. Factory owners could not afford to pay their employees. Many people lost their jobs. As a result, most Americans could not afford to buy all the goods that were being made.

Unsold goods began to pile up. Some factories made fewer goods, so the factories needed fewer workers. Even more people lost their jobs. The workers who had jobs were paid very little. Families sometimes had less than \$1.50 a day to buy food.

A Closer Look

TEENAGERS IN THE GREAT DEPRESSION

During the Great Depression, millions of Americans did not have a place to live. About 250,000 of those homeless Americans were under 21.

One reason teenagers left home was that there were no jobs. Others felt that they were a burden to their families. Some took to the road for the adventure.

Some teenagers traveled on top of boxcars. A boxcar is a type of railroad car. This ride was thrilling, but dangerous. Many died or were injured. Others died from disease or hunger. Sometimes, teenagers on the road would not eat for days.

Some teenagers found work on farms where they picked crops. Many did not find jobs until after the Great Depression came to an end.

Critical Thinking How was life difficult for a teenager during the Great Depression? Teenagers died from boxcar accidents, hunger, and disease. It was hard to find jobs.



Some teenagers left home to find jobs.

Farm families were deeply hurt by the Great Depression. When farmers began to default on the payments, banks were forced to **foreclose** on their property. Foreclose means to take the property of someone who has failed to pay back a loan. In one day in 1932, banks foreclosed on one fourth of all the farms in Mississippi.

The Great Depression grew even worse. Many Americans lost their homes as well as their jobs. In every large city, people stood in line for hours for free loaves of bread. Families sold apples to earn a few cents. Hungry children picked through garbage pails for scraps of food.

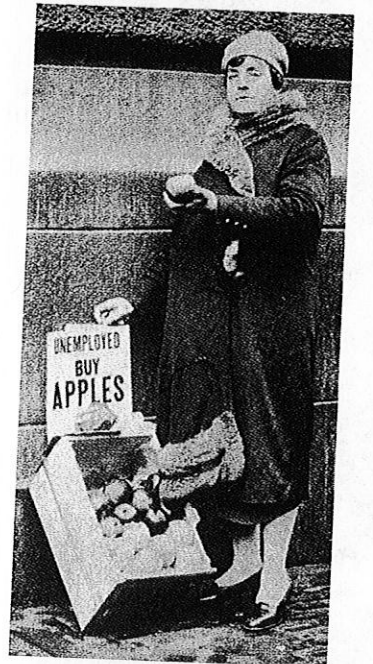
? What are two examples of hard times in the United States during the Great Depression? People lost their homes and jobs, waited for handouts, and rummaged for food.

Jobless and Hopeless

The Great Depression continued, and the government and business leaders had no answers. Americans asked President Hoover for help. Of course, Hoover wanted to end the Great Depression. However, he felt that help from government charity was not the answer. Hoover felt that Americans had to help themselves.

The failure of the government and big business to help people made many Americans angry. These are some of the things that people did to express their anger.

1. Some workers without jobs joined the Communist party.
2. Some farmers destroyed their crops rather than sell them at unfair prices.
3. Some farmers joined together to stop banks from taking their property.
4. Many World War I veterans marched on Washington, D.C., in 1932.



This woman sold apples to earn money.

Visual By 1933, one in four Americans who wanted to work was unable to find a job.

World War I veterans were especially angry with the government. After World War I, Congress had voted to give veterans a **bonus**. A bonus is money given in addition to what is owed.

When the Great Depression hit, the veterans asked for the bonus, but Congress refused to pay it. During the summer of 1932, 15,000 veterans formed what became known as the Bonus Army. They camped out in the nation's capital. The veterans promised to remain there until they received their bonuses.

President Hoover feared that there might be violence. He ordered U.S. troops to drive out the Bonus Army. Armed soldiers attacked the veterans' camps. The sight of American soldiers attacking men who had fought for their country sickened many people. To many Americans, it meant that a change was needed in government.

? How did President Hoover feel about the government helping Americans during the Great Depression?
President Hoover felt that government charity was not the answer to the problem.

Section 1 Review

1. How would buying stocks help people to become rich?
2. What happened to many businesses in the late 1920s?
3. **Critical Thinking** How do you think the U.S. government might have avoided the violence against the Bonus Army?
4. **Write About History** Choose one change in people's lives caused by the Great Depression. Write a newspaper article about the change.

More Review is provided in Exercise 79 of the Workbook.

Section

2

Hard Times for Americans

Words to Know

drought

a long period of very dry weather

migrant worker

a worker who travels from place to place to harvest crops

Getting Started Discuss with students a time when they could not fix a problem and had to start over again. Explain that for many families during the Great Depression, employment was so scarce that they had no choice but to try again somewhere else.

The Great Depression affected Americans in different ways. However, the people who suffered most were farmers, immigrants, African Americans, and unskilled workers. These Americans had difficult lives to begin with. During the Great Depression, their suffering was even greater. Unemployment for African Americans was twice the national average.

Changes in Family Life

The Great Depression brought many changes to American families. Some families who worked together to survive grew closer. However, in many cases, having no job or home tore families apart. Many men who felt hopeless left their wives and children. Many teenagers felt that they should support themselves, so they left home.

Millions of young children had to work to help their families survive. Children as young as seven years old sold newspapers, did yard work, and ran errands for a few pennies a day. Many children had to leave school to work or watch younger children while their parents looked for work.

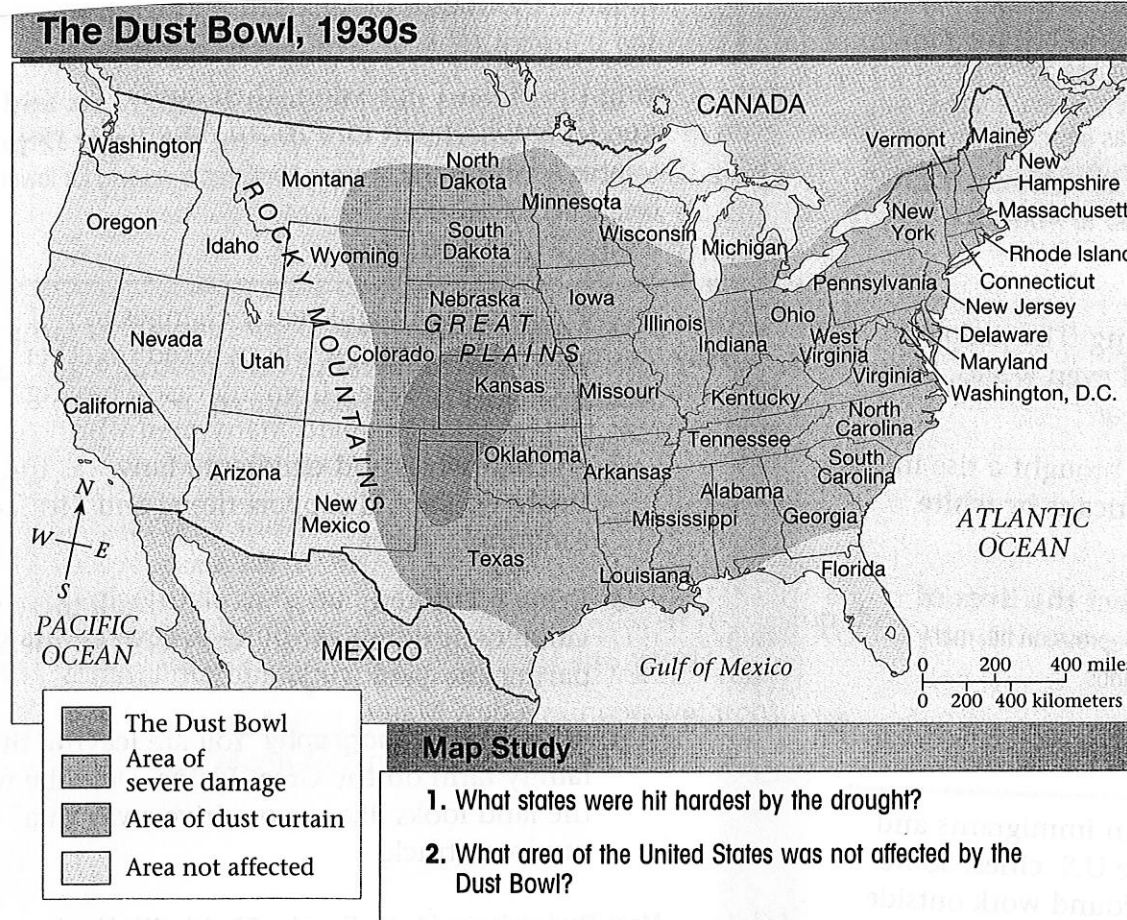
? How did the Great Depression change American family life? Some families split up. In other families, children often helped out.

Map This map shows the area affected by the Dust Bowl. Students might be surprised to learn how far east the dust blew.

The Dust Bowl

During World War I, farmers of the Great Plains made huge profits growing food for the armed forces. After World War I, falling prices made farming a difficult way to earn a living. Then shortly after the Great Depression began, a **drought** turned much of the Great Plains into a dusty, dry land. A drought is a long period of very dry weather. The Great Plains became a dust bowl.

By 1934, thousands of farmers decided to leave their farms. They packed everything they could into old cars



and trucks. They headed west on a long journey to California in search of work.

The newcomers were not welcome in California. The people there were suffering too. One sign at the California border said, "No Jobs in California. If you are looking for work—Keep Out."

Many newcomers worked for vegetable and fruit growers, picking crops. Whole families worked as **migrant workers**. A migrant worker travels from one place to another to harvest crops.

Working all day, a person might earn \$1.50. That was barely enough to keep someone alive. At night, people crowded into tents and slept on the ground. When the job was finished, they moved on to pick the next crop.

? Why did farmers on the Great Plains decide to leave their farms? They left in search of work after their farms had been destroyed by drought.

African Americans and the Great Depression

African Americans had been among the poorest Americans for a long time. When the Great Depression hit, their lives became even harder.

As the economy grew worse, African Americans were the first workers to be fired. Many bosses lowered the pay of African Americans to save money. Many African Americans, who often had the most dangerous and dirty jobs, lost their jobs to white people. By 1932, one half of all African Americans had no jobs.

Life in the South was even harder for African Americans. Most were farmers who worked the land of white owners. Whole families worked to grow cotton. They raised animals and a few crops to feed themselves.

Falling cotton prices in the early 1930s created terrible hardships. African Americans lived in shacks.

Economics Fact

During the Great Depression, a quart of milk sold for 10 cents. A loaf of bread cost 5 cents.

Economics Fact A six-room house could cost under \$3,000.



Jobs were hard to find. These African Americans drove from Tennessee to Arkansas to work for a day in the cotton fields.

Visual Some African American churches started free "soup kitchens" to feed the hungry. In some cities, African Americans joined together to buy large amounts of food at lower prices.

These shacks had no heat or plumbing. The people lived on corn meal, pork scraps, and even weeds. Some families lived on less than \$250 a year.

The hard times in the South also brought a rise in violence. Lynchings of African Americans by white people were always a threat.

? How did the Great Depression affect the lives of African Americans? When the Great Depression hit, many African Americans were the first to lose their jobs.

Mexican Americans and the Great Depression

During the 1920s, many Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans moved to large U.S. cities. Some came to work in factories. Others found work outside

the city on large farms. Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans suffered during the Great Depression.

As the Great Depression became worse, farm workers complained that Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans were taking jobs from other Americans. Factory workers in the cities said that Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans worked for lower pay and were taking their jobs.

Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans were forced to live in the poorest areas. Yet Mexican immigrants continued to settle in the United States even though they were not welcome. Local authorities ordered thousands of Mexican immigrants to leave the country.

Remember

In 1921, the government passed a law limiting the number of immigrants allowed into the United States.

? What problems did Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans face during the Great Depression?

Mexican Americans and Mexican immigrants worked for lower pay, lived in the poorest areas, and faced prejudices.

Section 2 Review

1. Why did the Great Depression affect farmers, Mexican immigrants, African Americans, and unskilled workers so much?
2. During the Great Depression, how was the treatment of African Americans and Mexican Americans alike?
3. **Critical Thinking** Why do you think there was violence against African Americans in the South during the Great Depression?
4. **Write About Geography** You are leaving the family farm on the Great Plains. Describe what the land looks like as you drive away in a rundown truck.

More Review is provided in Exercise 80 of the Workbook.

CONNECTING HISTORY AND THE ENVIRONMENT: The Dust Bowl

Early in the 1930s, a drought set in on the Great Plains. With no rainfall, the soil in the fields dried out. Grass, which was needed to protect the soil, could not grow in the sun-baked fields. Soon, the soil turned to dust and was blown away. Roads were covered with huge mounds of dust. Houses and barns were buried in sand. Some mounds of sand were 30 feet high. The Great Plains became a dust bowl.

Strong winds blew over the dry, bare fields. They carried the dust from the Great Plains eastward across the United States. The dust that drifted to the East coast was called a dust curtain.

In 1934, President Franklin Roosevelt ordered that trees be planted on millions of acres of farmland. Lines of trees called windbreaks were planted to protect the fields. This plan took many years to work. By then, most farmers had lost their land.

Answer the questions below.

1. Why was the Great Plains called the Dust Bowl in the early 1930s?
2. What did President Franklin Roosevelt do to stop the damage done by the drought and wind?

CHALLENGE How can citizens today help care for the environment?



Soil turned to dust and was blown away.

Section 3

The U.S. Government and the Great Depression

Words to Know

public works

construction projects paid for by public funds

relief

help given to poor people

Getting Started Discuss with students how a government might help hungry, jobless people. Explain that the people in the United States were in a situation so bad that the government needed to help them.

History Fact

Herbert Hoover was the first President to be born west of the Mississippi River. He was born in West Branch, Iowa.

History Fact After Hoover's election to the presidency, the ordinary cottage he grew up in became a tourist attraction. Grant Wood, the American artist, portrayed this image in his painting, *The Birthplace of Herbert Hoover, West Branch, Iowa*.

By 1932, most Americans blamed President Hoover for not doing enough to fight the Great Depression. Many people were surprised that Hoover had no answers. They felt it was time to look to another leader.

President Hoover's Actions

Herbert Hoover was a smart businessman who was a millionaire by the age of 40. During World War I, he had headed the government bureau that sent food and clothing to people in need in Europe.

When the Great Depression hit, Americans wondered why a smart businessman had so few plans for helping the U.S. economy. They also wondered why a man who helped Europeans in need could not find a way to help Americans.

In fact, some of President Hoover's actions made the problems in the economy worse. In 1930, Hoover signed a law that hurt trade with foreign countries. As a result, fewer goods came into the United States. American businesses were not able to sell goods overseas. The slowing of trade meant that European countries had to default on money they owed to the United States.

Summary Have students use this graphic organizer to outline the main ideas and details of the chapter.

Summary

During the Great Depression, many Americans were not able to find work. The Great Depression lasted about 10 years and affected every part of American life.

Section 1

The good times of the 1920s ended. When the stock market crashed in 1929, the Great Depression followed. It brought hard times to most Americans.

Section 2

Most Americans, especially African Americans, Mexican Americans, and Mexican immigrants, suffered in the Great Depression. The Dust Bowl forced thousands of farm families to move west.

Section 3

President Herbert Hoover was not able to get the nation out of the Great Depression. Franklin D. Roosevelt promised to help Americans. He was elected in 1932.

bonus

migrant worker

public works

default

drought

More Vocabulary Review is provided in Exercise 125 of the Classroom Resource Binder.

Vocabulary Review

Fill in the blank with a term from the list.

1. Building a canal to join two rivers is a ____ project.
2. People who ____ on their car payments may get into trouble.
3. Workers who work hard and bring more business to their company may be given a ____.
4. No rain for a long time may cause a ____.
5. A ____ may pick apples in one part of the country and oranges in another part.

Chapter Quiz

Write your answers in complete sentences.

1. What were two causes of the Great Depression?
2. How did jobless workers and farmers express their anger?
3. Why was life difficult for a migrant worker?
4. **Critical Thinking** Why did the failure of farms hurt African Americans, Mexican Americans, and Mexican immigrants so much?
5. **Critical Thinking** How did Hoover's trade policies affect the economy during the Great Depression?

Test Tip

To prepare for a test, write a list of questions you think will be asked. Then answer them.

Writing Tip

Do not begin sentences with *but* or *and*.

Using the Timeline

Use the timeline on pages 350–351 to answer the questions.

1. In what year were the most Americans out of work?
2. How many years after the stock market crash did farmers move west to search for work?

Group Activity See the Teacher's Planning Guide for a scoring rubric for this activity.

Group Activity

With your group, discuss the steps that you think President Roosevelt should take to begin to help Americans recover from the Great Depression. Make a list of your ideas. Check it against the steps you will read about in the next chapter.